

to the parents by the school advising them of the ACT Now program and the consequences of truancy. After three such absences, information is sent to the CJA which notifies the parents that they may be subject to legal action. Parents may then contact the CJA to get involved in community programs including counseling, support groups and parenting classes. Completion of these classes results in dismissal of the case.

Research by Baker, Sigmon, and Nugent (2001) show that after three years, the ACT Now program greatly increased awareness of truancy, as well as reducing the truancy problem. In the first program year (1994-95), 46 truancy cases were reported; two years later, 332 cases were reported. Also, the largest school district involved in the program experienced a 64 percent decrease in truancies during the last two program years, as well as decreased drop-out rates. While not specifically addressing any criminal data, the ACT Now program does provide an answer to juvenile truancy, which would likely coincide with a reduction in juvenile crime, at least during the day. Also, it can assist in providing a more thorough database for use by law enforcement.

#### **F. Truancy Reduction Demonstration Program (TDRP)**

Similar to the ACT Now program, though less structured, is the Truancy Reduction Demonstration Program (TDRP). This program has been part of larger Weed & Seed operations across the nation. Implemented slightly differently in each case, the TDRP includes certain core components: parental involvement, meaningful consequences for truancy and incentives for school attendance, and the use of community resources such as multi-agency collaboration. The TDRP is not so much a program in and of itself but, similar to Weed & Seed, it is more of a guideline for success.

The overall assessment of the TDRP showed several key factors to truancy reduction. First, the most important partnerships are those with